DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 404 247 SO 026 539

AUTHOR Fier, Harriet, Ed.; And Others
TITLE What Is a Flag? User Guide for Grades K-6. My America: Building a Democracy Series.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 9p.; "My America" is a 12-unit multimedia series with each unit consisting of a 15-20 minute videotape, resource directory diskette, and brief 8-page user guide. Only the printed user guides are included here; see SO 026 804-810 and SO 026 536-540.
AVAILABLE FROM New Castle Communications, 229 King Street, Chappaqua, NY 10514 (available in English and Spanish).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Citizenship Education; Critical Thinking; Democracy; Elementary Education; Intermediate Grades; Social History; *Social Studies; United States History
IDENTIFIERS *Flags

ABSTRACT

This user guide helps students understand the story of the U.S. flag and the meaning of the stars, stripes, and colors. The focus is on students learning about flags, drawing individual state flags, and researching the meaning behind them; studying other countries flags; discussing the United Nations flag; researching and discussing the history of the U.S. flag and why it has changed over time. Goals for the students to attain are to become familiar with the democratic process, understand citizenship, build communication skills, recognize laws governing people and how voting matters, and realize how caring and commitment build community. A seven-item bibliography for children and five-item bibliography for teachers concludes the guide. (JAG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 404 247

For Grades K-6

My America
Building a Democracy

CC

Available in English and Spanish

What Is a Flag?

User Guide

SO 026 539

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Shannon Murphy

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

My America: Building a Democracy

GOALS

To help children:

- become familiar with the democratic process and active citizenship,
- recognize what it means to be a citizen in a multicultural society,
- build skills in communications and cooperation,
- recognize how laws are made and how a single vote and voice matter, and
- experience how caring and commitment build community.

FORMAT

MY AMERICA is a 12-unit series, consisting of:

- 15-20 minute videos
- User Guides
- Resource Directory Disks (MS-DOS & MAC)

Materials were designed by educators, for educators. An interdisciplinary approach to hands-on learning is used.

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

The MY AMERICA kits motivate children to participate actively in their schools and local communities, and to experience the democratic process. The series attempts to demystify the government, explain how laws are made, and show how American democracy is always evolving. MY AMERICA combines elements of traditional civics and social studies curricula with techniques and activities that encourage children to participate and become involved. **Its underlying theme is: Democracy works best when everyone participates.**

MY AMERICA teaches in the voices of children in a way that respects their intelligence and natural curiosity.

THE VIDEOS

Each tape contains on-location documentaries, animation and historical illustration. A classroom modeling lesson encourages children to use their skills in reading, writing, listening, painting, singing and performing. The cooperative learning model is central to each video.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

Videos are developed within the following framework:

Kid View: Children give thought-provoking, lively opinions on each topic.

Documentary: Historical context and current concerns are blended with examples of children making a difference in their communities. This section is rich in historical information and opens up a wide range of discovery possibilities.

Modeling Lesson: Educators and students develop an interdisciplinary activity designed to bring alive the educational objective of the video.

Wrap Up: The key concept is recapped from the diverse perspectives of both children and adults.

PAUSE POINTS

The videotapes can be used in a variety of ways. Some educators use the tapes to teach three separate lessons on a concept. To facilitate this usage, a blackboard icon comes up between the Kid View, the Documentary and the Modeling Lesson, giving educators appropriate PAUSE POINTS during which to elaborate on concepts.

THE USER GUIDES

Guides provide multiple learning experiences, lesson plans and bibliographies built around social studies and citizenship themes. Suggested activities are interdisciplinary in approach and focus on skills in communication and cooperation.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY DISKS (MS-DOS & MAC)

MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disks include black-lined master activity sheets, samples of letters to parents and organizations, petitions, proclamations and press releases—all of which can be customized. Also included are a listing of additional resources, bibliographic references for students and teachers, historical documents, and curriculum correlations.

This icon 💾 indicates that additional material is available on the MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disk.

© 1994 New Castle Communications, Inc.

What is a Flag?

My America
Building a Democracy

Educational objective:

To learn the story of the American flag and understand the meaning of the stars and stripes and colors.

Student concept:

Our flag celebrates our country.

Video preview

In this videotape children describe flags, what they stand for and how flags make them feel. Traveling back to cave-dwelling days, the story of flags begins. Children see how Medieval knights used flags as banners and how Native American totem poles were a symbol of the animal spirit that watched over their people. Agreeing on a design for the America's flag took time. The stars, stripes and colors became symbols of how Americans thought about their country in 1776. Children see how the first flag was hand-made and how flags today are factory-made. A class designs their own flags choosing colors and images to celebrate their school.

"The flag kind of makes you happy because you're free."

—Fifth grader
Minnesota

Suggestions for using "What Is a Flag?"

As an Opening/Culminating Experience to a Unit of Study: The video and suggested activities are designed to supplement existing social studies curricula and civic education programs. The MY AMERICA contains curriculum correlation grids. The activities are highly motivating resources to introduce and engage youngsters in the story of the American flag. The historical story becomes a jumping off point to understanding how flags are designed and made today.

As an Individual Lesson: The suggested activities can easily be used to open discussion on Flag Day, Memorial Day or Presidents Day. The activities are divided into those appropriate for the primary, intermediate grade and upper elementary grade child.

As an Assembly Program: To prepare children for the video, each class experiences the Modeling Lesson Activity outlined on page 3. Instead of a school flag, the class collaborates on designing a flag to represent them. These flags are made out of construction paper and carried into the auditorium with marching music. The children carrying the flags come up to the front and display them to the group. The design of each flag is explained before introducing the video.

My America
Building a Democracy

What is a Flag?

"By creating their own flags, the children gain a sense of pride and learn interesting flag facts. It is a joy to see them working in harmony and enjoying a celebration of all flags with a parade."

—Frances Contreras
Modeling Teacher
PS 115
Manhattan

Getting ready to view the video

• During the week before you show the video, ask the children to notice where they see flags displayed in the community. As children report flag sitings, generate a list on a chart.

• For younger children, have them sit in a semi-circle around you, explain that they are about to see a video called *What Is a Flag?*. "We are going to learn how the American flag was created and what the stars and stripes and colors mean. Let's take a very good look at our American flag. What do you see?" Pass a small American flag around and have the children thoroughly describe it. What do you think the stars stands for? The stripes? The colors? What is a flag? Then have one child at a time complete the sentence: "Our flag celebrates..." These sentences join the list of where the flag is flying in the community.

• After a class discussion about symbols, 8-to-12 year olds communicate in small groups their responses to the following questions: Why do we have flags? Where do flags come from? How were flags used long ago? What are flags used for today? Has the American flag always looked like it does now? See the MY AMERICA for an activity sheet.

Key vocabulary: color, shape, symbol, freedom, loyalty, courage, brave, stars, stripes, flag pole, march, holiday, parade, totem pole

Video Modeling Lesson: Making a Flag

★ Children whose families came from other countries bring in the flag of that country or show a picture or create a drawing of it. Suggest they find out about them from their parents or with their parents at the library. The flags are taped on the blackboard after individual children talk about them. How do we feel when we celebrate the flag? Where do we see the American flag?

★ Class discussion about what the stars, stripes and colors represent on the flag. The word "symbol" is introduced and explained.

★ Brainstorm types of symbols that could be used on a design for their school flag. All ideas are listed on the board.

★ Working in pairs, children design a new school flag together.

★ Children come up to the front of the room and show their flags and then march around the classroom to the sounds of drum and bugle marching music in celebration.

Modeling Lesson Materials: construction paper, markers, crayons, stickers, glue, tape, marching music, audio cassette player or record player

Modeling Lesson Vocabulary: flag, symbol, celebrate, respect, stripes

What is a Flag?

My America
Building a Democracy

Follow-up activities for primary grade children

★Children research and draw what their city and state flags looks like. Center the discussion on how images and colors stand for ideas on flags.

★Generate a list of the different countries from which children, their parents, grandparents and great-grand parents trace their family roots. Children then break into groups to research, draw and display the flags of these countries. Native American children come from a tradition of individual nations. This is an opportunity to discuss why the Native American boy in the video does not feel the American flag represents everybody.

★The flag of the Olympic Games has five interlocking circles in the colors of purple, gold, black, green and red. Each circle represents people from the five continents on Earth. Open discussion on why these symbols and colors were chosen. Students create clay models of the Olympic flag.

BUDDY UP

The "making a flag" modeling activity provides an opportunity for fifth and sixth graders to "buddy up" with the kindergarden and first graders to help them create their own flags.

Follow-up activities for intermediate grade children

★The design of the flag of the United Nations is a globe circled by a pair of olive branches. Open discussion on how each image symbolizes one of the main goals of the UN—peace. Children create the lyrics and music of a world anthem to celebrate the United Nations flag.

★What would a flag that celebrated the Earth look like? Children break into groups to design an Earth flag to celebrate being a citizen of the planet. This is a another good activity to use the "buddy up" collaborative approach. The older children can choose a group of younger children to work with on this Earth flag.

★Each state has its own flag. Children break into groups, research and report on what the images and colors mean on each state flag. Children make a graph of the most widely used colors, symbols and shapes.

★As our country grew, the nation's flag changed. Children find out when these changes happened and what they were. Working in groups they research and create samples of the evolving versions of our flag.

Did You Know That?

In 1960, thirteen-year-old Benny Benson won a special contest to create the state flag of Alaska. The color of the flag is blue for the Alaskan sky and the forget-me-not—the state flower. Alaska is the northernmost state in America. Benny also decided to use the Big Dipper in his design because it points to the North Star and symbolizes the strength of the Great Bear.

My America
Building a Democracy

What is a Flag?

The MY AMERICA Newsletter publishes active citizenship projects and activities. Send your photos, stories, and videotapes to:

MY AMERICA Newsletter
c/o New Castle Communications
229 King Street
Chappaqua, NY 10514

Follow-up activities for upper grade children

★There are six major flag patterns: triangle, quarterly, border, cross, Scandinavian cross and saltire. Working in groups, the students create line drawings of these patterns, find examples or draw the nation flags that fall into each category. The work is then displayed. Children vote on one country from each flag pattern and celebrate its culture with a food festival that parents are invited to attend.

★The Flag Code contains rules about how to take care of and display the American flag. The rules are based on treating the flag with respect. Students research these rules in the library and then check to see if the flag is being treated properly in the school, on other public buildings in the neighborhood or at public events. If there are problems, letters are written to the people responsible for the building or event. See the MY AMERICA .

★Each time a new country is formed, the world map changes. Children break into four groups by decades. They research the countries born during specific time periods and their flags. Children display illustrations of each new flag and compare how the world map changed during each of these decades.

Did You Know That?

ON THE AMERICAN FLAG

Red = Courage
White = Liberty
Blue = Loyalty

ONE VERY BIG FLAG

Mary Pickersgill and her daughter made one of the largest American flags. It was 42 ft. X 30 ft. and was flown over Ft. McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore. This is the flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the Star Spangled Banner.

7

My America
Building a Democracy

Bibliography

FOR Children

Baker, JW. *Independence Day Magic.* Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1990. Magic tricks and illustrations based on patriotic symbols associated with July 4th. For 8 to 12 year olds.

Brandt, SR. *State Flags* including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. New York: Franklin Watts, 1992. Color illustrations and a one page story on each flag along with the state motto and the date the flag was adopted. For 8 to 12 year olds.

Caney, S. *Kids' America.* New York: Workman Publishing Company, Inc, 1978. Wide range of exciting activities and projects with a section on understanding how shape, color, line, texture, light, motion and composition affect how we feel about the images we see.

Fisher, LE. *Stars and Stripes: Our National Flag.* Holiday House, 1987. A history of the flag. For Grades 2-5.

Giblin, JC. *Fireworks, Picnics and Flags.* New York: Clarion Books, 1983. The symbols of the 4th of July are explained and illustrated. Grades 4-6.

Jefferis, D. *Flags.* New York: Franklin Watts Inc, 1985. An easy-to-read fact book with color pictures of flags from around the world.

Spier, P. *The Story of the Star-Spangled Banner.* New York: Doubleday, 1973. Beautiful drawings for each line of the national anthem.

FOR TEACHERS

Crampton, W. *The Complete Guide To Flags.* New York: Gallery Books (W.H. Smith Publishers), 1989.

Haban, RD. *How Proudly They Wave: Flags of the Fifty States,* Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1989. Interesting stories about the design of each state flag along with colorful illustrations.

Mastai, B. and Mastai, M.L. D'Otrange. *The Stars and The Stripes.* New York: Knopf Publishing, 1973. A history of the American flag with beautiful illustrations.

Parrish. *The American Flag: The Symbol of Our Nation Throughout Its History.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973. The story of how the flag evolved over time along with the rules of the Flag Code and definitions of words associated with the flag.

Flags Through the Ages & Across the World. New York: McGraw Hill, 1975.

MY AMERICA BOARD OF ADVISORS

Robert Berger
Fifth Grade Teacher
Los Angeles, CA

Arleen Chatman
Librarian
Los Angeles, CA

Frances Contreras
First Grade Teacher
New York, NY

Paul Hanson
Executive Director, Social Sciences
Dade County School System
Miami, FL

Sel Shimmerlik
Resource Teacher, K-5
Chappaqua, NY

Cordell Svengalis, PhD
Social Science Consultant
Des Moines, IA

COMMITTEE OF CIVIC EDUCATORS

R. Freeman Butts
Emeritus Professor
The Foundation of Education
Teachers College
Columbia University

Lorraine Canoe
Department of Black & Puerto Rican Studies
Hunter College

Rhonda Haines
State Bar of Texas
Public Service Law-Related Education

Scott Stripling
The National Center for American Founding Documents

Check the MY AMERICA for additional resources along with black-lined activity masters and Fabulous Flag Facts.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MY AMERICA:
LEARNING ABOUT
DEMOCRACY

USER GUIDES and DIRECTORY DISK

Editor
Harriet Fier

Writer/Editor
Anne Marie Santoro

Researchers
Toby Appleton
Jenny Gillespie

Art Direction
David Kaestle, Inc.

Production
MSI New York

Photography
Robin Bowman
Marianne Barcellona
Steve Northrup

MY AMERICA consists of the following program titles:

What Is a Flag?
A Pledge Is a Promise
Neighborhood and Community
Liberty and Justice
What Is an American?
The Story of the National Anthem
What Is a Democracy?
How Our Laws Are Made
Becoming an Active Citizen
Rights and Responsibilities

Teaching in a Multicultural Society (For Teachers)
Parents, Teachers and Community: Working Together (For Parents)

Resources available, AT NO CHARGE, when you purchase the entire multimedia series:
MY AMERICA Newsletter: published three times during the school year.
MY AMERICA Teacher Training Video: 10 classroom activities around civic issues.

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

—The Great Law of the Six Nations
Iroquois Confederacy

About New Castle Communications, Inc.
MY AMERICA is published by New Castle Communications, Inc. The company is creating educational materials in video, print and computer software formats. New Castle Communications is committed to designing, producing and distributing multimedia materials that engage children and inspire them to get involved in their classrooms, schools and communities.

NEW CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
229 King Street, Chappaqua, NY 10514 914-238-0600 Fax 914-238-8485